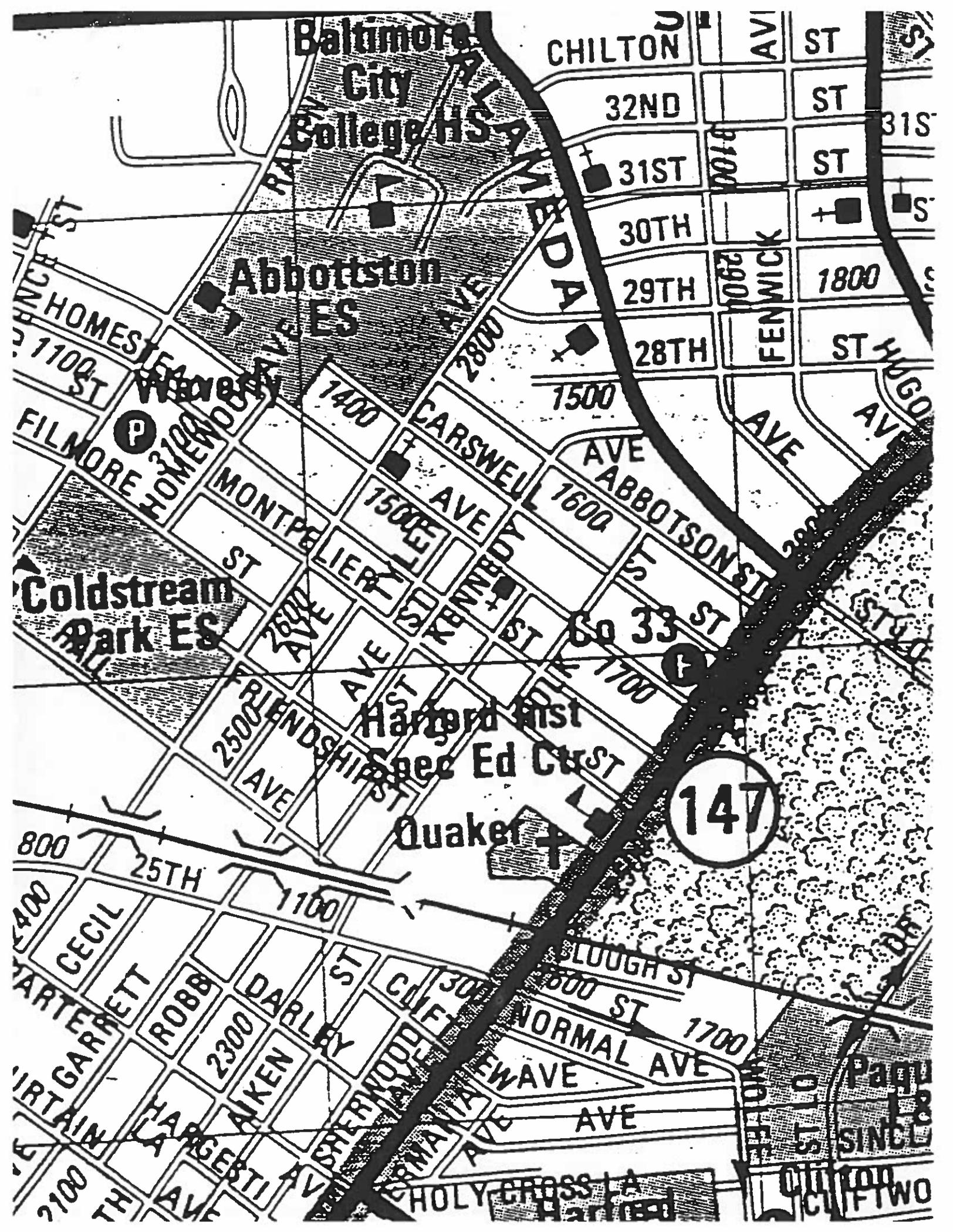


# Landmark Designation Report Friends Burial Ground

2506 Harford Road  
September 14, 1999  
For the Commission for Historical  
And Architectural Preservation





Baltimore  
City  
College HS

Abbottston  
ES

Coldstream  
Park ES

Harvard Inst  
Spec Ed Ctr

Quaker

147

CHILTON AVI ST  
32ND ST  
31ST ST  
30TH ST  
29TH ST  
28TH ST

HOMES  
1100 ST  
FILMORE ST

MONTPELIER ST  
2500 AVE  
2300 AVE  
2100 AVE

CARSWELL AVE  
1500 AVE  
1600 AVE  
1700 AVE  
1800 AVE

FENWICK AVE  
HUGO AVE  
33 ST  
1700

800  
25TH  
1100  
CECIL ST  
ROBB ST  
DARLEY ST  
GARRETT ST  
HARVEY ST  
Aiken St

CLIFFWOOD AVE  
3000 ST  
1700  
NEWAVE  
AVE

BLOUGH ST  
500 ST  
1700  
SINGLE  
CLIF TWO

# Friends Burial Ground

## Baltimore City Landmark Designation Report

### September 14, 1999 Commission Hearing

The Baltimore City Commission For Historical and Architectural Preservation has determined that the Friends Burial Ground, located at 2506 Harford Road meets criteria one of the Commission's Standards for Landmark Designation:

1. Dates from a particular period having a significant character, interest, or value, as part of the development, heritage, or culture of the City of Baltimore; and

The Friend's Burial Ground meets criteria one as being the oldest religious site still in existence in Baltimore City, as well as being the oldest Quaker burial ground in Baltimore. The burial ground retains remarkable historic integrity, which can be seen and *felt* within the stone walls of the burial ground. In addition, the sexton's house, built around 1854 adds to the historic character of the Property. In all, the burial ground along with the Sexton's house is a remarkable monument to the character and virtues of the Quaker faith.

#### **History and Support:**

The Society of Friends has been the steward of the Friend's burial ground since 1713, a 286 year stewardship. In 1713 the newly purchased one acre tract was part of the wilderness frontier. Twenty-two years earlier in 1692 the Baltimore County Rangers were created "to watch and guard the Frontiers of the Province be still continued and that Captain Thomas Richardson with twelve men under his Command be appointed to range on the Frontiers of Baltimore County". Today, nestled within an urban landscape, the Friend's burial ground, in its quiet simplicity, is a monument to an extremely significant spiritual movement that has also traversed with Baltimore a journey from wilderness to urban development. No other religious ground in Baltimore can trace its history to 16 years before the founding of Baltimore Town.

As early as 1703 the first record of a Patapsco meeting was pinpointed at the house of John Wilmore, on the north side of that [Patapsco] River. (Minute by Minute page 9). The Patapsco Meeting was held in private houses until 1713, when "John Ensor, planter of Baltimore sold to Richard Taylor, planter, one acre parcel of land." In 1714, a Quaker petition was presented to the superior court of Baltimore County at Joppa:

The petition of John Wilmot, Richard Taylor, and Jonathon Hanson, of Patapsco river, in the county aforesaid. Whereas the people called Quakers, have built a Meetinghouse, for to meet together to Love and Worship god,

in accordance to his blessed appointment, these are to desire for the body of the People aforesaid. That the aforesaid Meeting House may be recorded, according to the appointment or Parliament, the aforesaid house is built within two miles of Jones Falls, on a parcel of land called, "Darly Hall" and your Petitioners shall as in Duty bound pray which petition of the Quakers aforesaid, be by the Court heard understood and mutually deliberated, is granted & c (min by min page 6).

From 1714 to 1781 the Patapsco Meeting was held at Friendship part of the Darley Hall tract until the meeting was moved to Aisquith Street. Here the meeting was held at Aisquith Street until 1805 when it moved again to Lombard Street. Thus, the log meeting house on Harford road was abandoned but still in the hands of Quaker stewards. In 1859 the Burial Ground committee minutes "showed that the meeting purchased land adjacent to Friendship in 1859 for \$1,408.11" Shortly after 1861 a dwelling was built for the sexton and the grounds were enclosed with an eight-foot stone wall. In 1926 two rows of weathered markers (122 graves) were reinturred from the Aisquith meeting house. Today, the burial ground is still active and well kept.

## DESCRIPTION

Friendship is a three-acre cemetery on Harford Road in what is now Inner City Baltimore. About 2.5 acres of the burial grounds make up a quadrilateral, the longer ends running east and west, with the eastern edge following the angle of Harford Road. The original acre is now the southwest portion of the cemetery. The graveyard is separated from its bustling neighborhood by a 19<sup>th</sup> Century eight-foot high stone wall. Inside, large trees intersperse with compact lines of small simple grave markers, totaling near 2400. An Iron Gate in the east-facing wall off Harford Road provides the main entrance into the burial grounds. A plaque in the original section (supposedly) marks where the 1714 Friends Meeting House stood. The 1861 sexton's house is in the southeast corner of the graveyard. A stone shed behind the house and a vault against the middle of the northern wall comprise the other historically contributing structures at the site.

When the land for the Friends Burial Ground was first purchased, Harford Road was a dirt pathway known as Darly Path. This path connected Darly Hall plantation (which was located east and west of Darly Hall and North of North Avenue) to the old Main Road. Only Darly Hall and the Old Main Road (a.k.a. Philadelphia Road) is known to exist in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Northeast Baltimore. Most likely, Friendship meeting house, as it was called in 1714, drew in a concentric circle where upon Friends came from the north and South along dirt paths. Most likely though, friends travelled up or down the old main old and then headed north to Darly Hall.

Sometime between 1713 and 1726, a wooden meetinghouse was erected near the center of the original plot. There are no records of the interments in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but there are unmarked graves near the site of the old meeting house which likely date back to 1713.

In 1729 Baltimore Town was founded, but the graveyard remained well outside the city limits and retained its rural surroundings. The meetinghouse began to deteriorate after 1781 when the Patapsco monthly meeting moved to its new brick home off of Aisquith Street. Sometime in the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Meetinghouse was razed. Between 1802 and 1832 thirty-two marked gravestones were placed in the cemetery.

In 1859 the additional two acres that make up Friendship were added to the north and east. The original tract was a rectangle, half of which now extends south beyond the added acreage to form the protruding triangle. The sexton's house and the walls enclosing the graveyard were planned in 1861. The sexton's house is a simple fieldstone building two bays wide and two stories high. The architecture is neither ostentatious nor ornamented with detail. It is representative of the Quaker faith. Together the house and burial ground lend to the urban hectic life a quiet place of repose.

# **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

## **FRIENDS BURIAL GROUND**

**The Commission approves the landmark designation of the Friends Burial Ground located at 2506 Harford Road because it meets landmark criteria number one because it dates from a particular period having a significant character, interest, or value, as part of the development, heritage, or culture of the City of Baltimore. Friends Burial Ground is the oldest religious site still in existence in Baltimore, as well as being the oldest Quaker religious site in Baltimore.**